

Testimony regarding Governor Malloy's proposed budget cuts to DDS

Alfred D. and Geraldine J. Ulozas
49 Freedom Road
Middlebury, CT 06762

Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee

We are the parents of two adult sons who are DDS clients and currently live at home with us. Both will eventually need residential supports in the form of group home placement. We have been informed by our last DDS case manager that the existing reduced level of state funding has adversely affected the ability of DDS staff to place its clients in group homes. Since 2012, more than \$50 million has been cut from DDS, causing the DDS waiting list to grow to more than 2000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities(I/DD) who need residential services. When both of us die or become unable to care for our sons at home, DDS will presumably step in and provide residential services for our sons. This policy, is likely to cause deep anxiety and uncertainty in the minds of parents such as ourselves, and does not speak well of our state's concern for its special needs residents and those who currently care for them at home.

To add to our anxiety over the proposed DDS budget cuts, We have been informed by DDS that our former case manager, who recently retired, will not be replaced by a new case manager to continue to service our sons. We were told by a DDS supervisor that the proposed budget cuts to DDS have created this situation. We were also told that if there is an "emergency" situation, a temporary case manager will be assigned to assist us. Should we, in fact, be faced with an emergency situation, we should not have to depend on a randomly assigned person to help us deal with it. A case manager should know his/her clients and be aware of their unique needs and potential problems. He/she should monitor clients on an ongoing basis, as has been done before the proposed budget cuts.

S.B. 1135 seeks to reduce the effect of revenue volatility on our state's budget. We both testify in favor of this effort, as well as in favor of higher revenue in the upcoming fiscal year to avoid harmful cuts to crucial public benefits.